

ASHEVILLE AND VICINITY FEATURES OF THE LAND OF THE SKY.

No Scenery More Picturesque Than the Mountain Country of North Carolina—Asheville the Saratoga of the South—A Cosmopolitan City on "Seven Hills"—Hotels and Clubs.

North Carolina is not alone great in her industrial and material wealth; she is majestic and sublime in the stupendous works of the Almighty, as portrayed in towering mountains and deep shadowed gorges and immense forests. The East has its White mountains, the West has its Rockies and its Sierras, and British Columbia her Cascades, her gold and her Selkirk and Alaska her St. Elias Alps, in whose barren and deep summits pierce the very heavens, noble fortresses and features of strength on nature's face. All these have been permitted to behold in their new grandeur, but nowhere in this country is there a region more picturesque, more charmingly beautiful than the mountain country of western North Carolina, poetically known as "The Land of the Sky."

While it is true those of the West, built on the undulating land, not too closely, the average residence lot having a seventy-five foot frontage. Lance Monument is located here. There are few cities in the South which have as large a number of beautiful residences as Asheville. The most of these are built on the "Seven Hills," a name given to the seven hills which are the most beautiful in the city. Many people from all over the country have been attracted here on account of its delightful and healthful climate and making Asheville their permanent home, have built modern hotels in many instances luxurious homes, one of them Mr. George Vanderbilt, the most costly residence in America. A worthy description of it will require a special letter. Asheville has a permanent population of 14,000 and several thousand visitors who sojourn at the various hotels, as a health resort.

The visitor is at once favorably impressed with the progressive character of its citizens, who evince a strong town pride in advancing the material interests of the community and its new center of merit and enterprise, meet with instant recognition and support. Since it has become an all the year round health-resort it has had a vigorous growth and an active air of commercial life and upon every turn there are indisputable evidences of thrift and prosperity. The shopping center of Asheville, is so up-to-date in all its features that one might well believe themselves in a city of 50,000 population. The street between the principal streets, some twelve miles, with asphalt blocks and completing a system of general sewerage, (now laid twelve miles), made easy by the topography of the locality, also an excellent water supply, and a fine electric system of electric street railway and the streets are lighted also by electricity. A dummy has been constructed upon Sunset mountain from where is obtained one of the most beautiful views in the South. Here are to be seen handsome churches and school buildings.

AN EDUCATIONAL CENTER. Asheville has become quite an educational center and has several well known institutions of learning of the highest excellence. The Bingham school, for boys, established in 1792, long known as one of the best of its class in America; the Asheville college, a school for girls, and young women; Miss Champion's school, for girls; the Skyland Institute, the Asheville Free Kindergarten association, with four schools maintained by private subscription and the Asheville Business college. The most important and one of great interest to us, having received substantial aid from the Presbytery of Lackawanna, through the "Woman's Home Missionary Board," are the "Home Industrial School," with Miss Florence Stephenson as superintendent, which is doing a noble work in the line of practical education for girls, and the "Asheville Normal and Collegiate Institute," established for the higher education of young women for teachers, organized by Rev. L. M. Deane and now under the control of the Northern Presbyterian church with Rev. Dr. Thomas Lawrence as superintendent. These two institutions are located in a beautiful park of thirty-five acres on one of Asheville's "seven hills" and are worthy of an extended description, which may appear at an early day. There is also the Asheville Farm school, occupying 420 acres which has over one hundred students, and are doing agricultural work on approved and practical scientific lines. Asheville has for years past been famous for its hospitality to "the stranger within its gates," as the guests at its commodious and magnificent hotels, the Battery Park hotel, the Kenilworth Inn, the Margo Terrace and the Alderman and cottages. All are worthy of special mention but as the limits of this article only permits a brief description of the striking features of this highly favored section and its attractive city, its schools and seminaries. I can only describe two—the Battery Park and Kenilworth Inn.

BATTERY PARK HOTEL. This beautiful Battery Park hotel, which has been happily termed "the half-way house between the North and the South" stands on an extensive 125 feet along the streets of Asheville, which is built around the foot of the noble hill which the hotel so becomingly crowns. The hotel stands in the center of a natural park of twenty-five acres and possesses the attraction of being directly in the city and yet not in it, for while it is not a moment's walk into the very center of Asheville, yet it is entirely removed from all the turmoil and dust. The hotel is surrounded by a grove of oaks and presents a most inviting and picturesque appearance. It is so secluded in its own environment that the sojourner within its hospitable walls may find, if they desire absolute restfulness and repose, or among its cosmopolitan guests may find the intellectual of all nations, or may enter into the gaieties of the most refined amusement. This beautiful structure is so closely associated with Asheville, that the names are almost synonymous. It derives its name from its being located on a historic spot, the very point where the Confederates planted a battery of artillery, for the defence of the city during the Civil war. Then the grim instruments of death glared viciously

over the breast works, which still remain, but long since the cannon have yielded their places to flowers and shrubs and the happy voices of children are heard as they romp over the well-turfed slopes. The hotel is modern and architecturally beautiful. Its 110 rooms are 475 feet and wide, comfortable verandas, encompass it on all sides, they are so broken by gables, oriel and bow windows, that the dimensions deceive the eye. They are made doubly attractive in summer by an abundance of floral baskets and wide awnings and in winter enclosed in glass, so that in inclement weather, the invalid guests may enjoy their sun-baths and promenades without leaving the hotel. The main office of running the most home-like and attractive with its huge and old fashioned furniture, broad and graceful stairways and easy stairs. Directly off the rotunda, on one side, are the spacious parlors and on the other a series of open air porches connecting rooms, devoted to the use of the ladies for writing, reading and billiard playing. The ball room is 150 x 50 feet and one of the handsomest of any resort in the country. The hotel is heated by steam, has open air places and lighted wholly by electricity. The house is especially adapted for an all-the-year-round patronage. The manager, Mr. E. P. McKissick, also proprietor, is a gentleman, whose genial personality and round good fellowship, has given him a reputation as an ideal host which has reached far beyond the limits of North Carolina.

A SWELL FEATURE. I should mention one of the popular and enjoyable features of the hotel, the "Swannanoa Hunt club." It is the swell "feature" society of the city, its leading people being members and its balls which are held at the Battery Park are brilliant affairs. The club has two houses for fox hunting, one on the lawn of the hotel adjoining the conservatories, the other near Sulphur Springs, four miles from the city. All guests of the hotel are made welcome at either club, and for those who do not care for fox hunting, the club provides an ample supply of either saddle or driving horses, as an out-door exercise. The club houses are artistically furnished with mementos of the chase, trappings, and pictures of the most special range, being fitted up with saddles who ride in, or enjoy the chase. So I might enumerate. This feature added to golf, fishing and hunting for big game, makes Asheville an ideal spot for sportsmen. The Battery Park is its complete resort in the South. Truly the haven of health, recreation and pleasure unalloyed.

From the hotel veranda a marvelous vista opens before the eye. The scene changes with the hours for the rosy lights of morning, the blue of midday and the shadows of the evening, give each in their turn a new and varied charm to the view—the most magnificent panorama of mountain scenery in America.

What do we see? Dominating the city like the capitol at Washington, one looks out on every side across an interval of compacted brick and mortar to circumcinct hills and wooded ridges crowned with modern villas. In the near foreground are the streets, streets, and boulevards and handsome homes of Asheville. To the left two miles on a higher plateau the capacious Kenilworth Inn, proudly overlooking the city and valley and adjoining it the Kenilworth chateau and directly in front, as a grand center piece of this array of mountains stands Old Pisgah, 6,717 feet high with its sentinels on each side forming a gigantic loop 250 miles long, the highest peak of the loftiest range in the Black mountains and said by geologists to be the "oldest land" in America. The highest peak Mount Mitchell, 6,717 feet or 424 feet higher than Mount Washington. Clingmans Dome, 6,066 feet, the highest of the Blue Ridge mountains, overlooking Richland Balsam, the highest peak of the Balsam, the Yellow mountains, 5,133 feet the highest in the Cowee range, while Standing Indian and Wayah Bald are 5,067 feet, the loftiest peaks in the North Carolina mountains. The peaks rise to an elevation of 5,314 feet. There are 43 mountains in western North Carolina that tower over 6,000 feet high.

THE FIRST VIEW WHICH THE TRAVELER FROM THE NORTH HAS OF ASHEVILLE, IS THAT OF THE SUPERB KENILWORTH INN, which graces like a queen, a noble hill, capriciously by nature, overlooking the city, 200 feet below and two miles away, and the beautiful French Broad and Swannanoa rivers in the valley. Its many picturesque gables and towers are seen for miles, either up or down the fertile valley. The towers are a capital, among them George W. Vanderbilt, attracted by the equable climate and beauties of Asheville, purchased a tract of 160 acres upon the steep slopes of the mountain, within the city limits and erected this massive, beautiful structure which from any point of view is picturesque from without and inviting and home-like from within. The roadway, leading from the Battery Park, descends steeply and commodated and winds gracefully up through the ravine and woodland to the porte cochere, marking its entrance is constructed of granite and is built in the style of a fortress. This first story of the Inn is built of stone and surrounded by piazzas, some twenty feet in width, which are duplicated on the stories above. The porches cover 1,000 feet of surface and are broken up into a variety of terraces. Within the towers are two magnificent sun parlors, thirty-three feet in diameter from which can be obtained views covering 1,200 square miles of territory, including 25 peaks, of the 43 to be found in this section, which are higher than Mount Washington or anything east of the Rocky mountains, the highest being Mount Mitchell, 6,742 feet high.

To say that the office is large and airy, the parlors elegant and dainty and also something of the impressionative, hardly expresses the impressions of the curious visitor. It is simply perfection, an ideal home. Looking from the knoll and two hundred feet below, is the Swannanoa river, the most beautiful stream in the South, with rapids in the immediate view, leading music to the scene, while a shady road of twenty miles along its banks is one romantic drive. The hotel faces the south and overlooks the magnificent estate of George W. Vanderbilt, which it joins and a view of this spot that he has chosen above all others to be his home where he has spent his millions is beautiful beyond description. A description of this famous chateau will appear next week.

J. E. Richmond.

The P. O. S. of A. camp, 583, of Old Forge, will hold a fair at Holland's hall, Old Forge, February 19, 20, 21 and 22. Admission 10 cents.

REPORT of the Controller of Lackawanna County

To the Honorable, the Judges of the Court of Common Pleas of Lackawanna County, L. EDWARD A. JONES, County Controller, being duly qualified according to law, submit herewith a statement of the receipts and expenditures of Lackawanna County, from July 1, 1901 to January 6, 1902, as required by Section 6 (3) of Act creating office of County Controller, approved 27th June, 1893, P. L. 403.

Table with columns: RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURES OF LACKAWANNA COUNTY, FROM JULY 1, 1901, TO JANUARY 6, 1902. Includes items like Cash on hand in County Treasury, State fund, County Controller's balance, RECEIPTS, and SOURCE OF REVENUE.

Table with columns: CASH ON HAND, JANUARY 6, 1902, IN FOLIO. Includes items like County, School, Road, Poor, Relief and unseated lands, Bonds, Bicycle, Alien tax.

Table with columns: RECAPITULATION. Includes Cash in Treasury July 1, 1901, and RECEIPTS for July, August, September, October, November, December.

Table with columns: EXPENDITURES. Includes By warrants, etc., 1901 (6th month), and RECEIPTS for July, August, September, October, November, December.

Table with columns: EXPENDITURES IN DETAIL. Includes ASSESSMENTS, ADVERTISING, AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY, BRIDGES, COUNTY AUDITORS, COUNTY COMMISSIONERS, COURT HOUSE GROUNDS, COURT EXPENSES, COMMONWEALTH COSTS, BIRTHS AND DEATHS, DIVISIONS, ELECTION EXPENSES, EXEMPTION OF SCHOOL CHILDREN, INSURANCE, INQUESTS, PRINTING AND STATIONERY, PUBLIC BUILDING EXPENSES.

Table with columns: STATE HOSPITAL, STATE INDUSTRIAL REFORMATORY, STATE HOSPITAL FOR CHRONIC INSANE, BUNDRY EXPENSES, TAXES REFUNDED, TEMPORARY LOANS, FIRE WARDS, COUNTY DETECTIVE, LEGAL EXPENSES, HOUSE OF REFUGE, COUNTY INFIRMARY, DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS.

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Statement of Collectors of State and County Tax for Year 1901

Large table with columns: DISTRICT, COLLECTOR, County Duplicate, State Duplicate, Supp. Additional, Dog Duplicate, Total, Economic, Commission, Cash Paid Treasurer, Due County. Lists various districts and collectors with their respective tax amounts.

For Year 1896.

Table with columns: DISTRICT, COLLECTOR, County Duplicate, State Duplicate, Dog Duplicate, Total, Economic, Commission, Cash Paid Treasurer, Due County. Data for year 1896.

For Year 1897.

Table with columns: DISTRICT, COLLECTOR, County Duplicate, State Duplicate, Dog Duplicate, Total, Economic, Commission, Cash Paid Treasurer, Due County. Data for year 1897.

For Year 1898.

Table with columns: DISTRICT, COLLECTOR, County Duplicate, State Duplicate, Dog Duplicate, Total, Economic, Commission, Cash Paid Treasurer, Due County. Data for year 1898.

For Year 1899.

Table with columns: DISTRICT, COLLECTOR, County Duplicate, State Duplicate, Dog Duplicate, Total, Economic, Commission, Cash Paid Treasurer, Due County. Data for year 1899.

For Year 1900.

Table with columns: DISTRICT, COLLECTOR, County Duplicate, State Duplicate, Dog Duplicate, Total, Economic, Commission, Cash Paid Treasurer, Due County. Data for year 1900.

Financial Statement of Lackawanna County.

Table with columns: RESOURCES, LIABILITIES, Accrued valuation for year 1901, Amount of county tax duplicate for year 1901, State 1891, State 1901, Lackawanna County, A. J. Jones, County Controller, J. COPELAND, Prothonotary.